Moving Ahead Together:

Celebrating the Legacy, Shaping the Future of Maternal and Child Health

Plenary II

Making Change Happen:

What Does "Change" Mean for State MCH Programs?

March 6-10, 2010

MALLORY SEAR: My name is Mallory Sear. I am from Maine; I live in Maine. I graduated from college two years ago and now I'm working full-time on to grants through Title V. One of them is the Health & Ready to Work National Resource Center and the other is our State D70 Grant, which actually just ended but I'm still working with the state children with special health needs program through Title V as the Youth Coordinator.

It's hard. It's hard and it's unfair. The kids that I work with and see on a daily basis should have the same opportunities as their peers, regardless of a diagnosis. Everyone should be able to work, everyone should be able to go to college, everyone should be able to have friends and seeing kids who don't have those opportunities because they can't get services or their aren't people supporting them it breaks their heart sometimes. It really does.

I want to make that not be the case anymore. Yeah, there are some times when I get hit over the head with a lot of stories and I'm saying, "I'm one person; I can't

change this.” But I also know that I have the power and skills and the determination to be the voice of the youth, who can’t speak up for themselves and that, to me, is an honor.

The biggest obstacle as a youth advocate is probably getting your voice heard. A lot of groups are striving for youth involvement but they haven’t achieved the point of actually listening and respecting the youth leaders as equal partners. I think a lot of the times there’s tokenism and thinking that having a youth in the room is enough, but it’s not enough. We have a lot of work to do and I would like to see it get to a point where every state has a Youth Advisory Council and youth are being invited to national conferences and meetings and are really actively participating and being engaged.

I think that all youth have very valuable skills and stories to offer and I think that people at a higher level and in places of power need to start listening and realizing that we are in the system, where in the programs we know where things are lacking and where the struggles are.

We live it every day and I think that people who live it need to work with the people who can fix it and I think if that were to happen, I mean, it’d be unstoppable. We’re seeing a lot of system changes with the new administration and also budget cuts and we’re in a time of transition. I do want to be a part of

that change, but I think Title V has done a lot of good work but like I said we have a lot of work to do.

There's a surge of thrill and motivation that comes with just being in our nation's capital with people who are listening to our stories and families and youth are getting more and more involved. I think it's really exciting that national organizations are listening to families and youth and I think it's a stepping stone for our involvement and I'm really excited to stay involved and see how things progress.

We have come a long way in the world of disabilities and special healthcare needs, but we have so much farther to do. So as hard as it can be sometimes you got to keep the motivation, you got to keep the energy and you got to remember why you do it.

My main message – that's important – is that we need to all be in this together. It's a big world and resources are getting more and more limited and I think that the people with the power and the resources need to listen to the people who are living it everyday and I think that by partnering, instead of working against each other, is the only way change is going to happen.

LORETTA FUDDY: Aloha and good morning. Welcome back to AMCHP 2010. As you can see, it's very exciting. We have a few surprises for you today, just like

the Oscars last night. We want to say a big Mahalo, thank you, to Mallory and her mom is in the audience right at the front table. Do you want to stand, raise your hand?

And thank you Mallory for reminding us about the importance of having our Youth Advisory Councils and we need to make sure that every state has one and that we do listen to the voices of our youth.

I'm **** Loretta Fuddy. I'm the Title V Director for Hawaii and I also serve as Treasurer for AMCHP. It's my pleasure to do the introductory marks this morning and welcome our guest speaker. Unfortunately, we learned that Secretary Sebelius has been called away by the president to another meeting and is not able to join us this morning. We will be hearing from Assistant Secretary Howard at lunch this afternoon, who will join us on behalf of both Secretary Sebelius and the Surgeon General.

I am sure many of you understand how busy these officials are and while we are disappointed that they cannot join us today, we have already invited them for our next AMCHP meeting 2011, in February. So we're right on it. Oops, sorry.

I'd like you to join me this morning in recognizing an MCH leader in our midst as we present the 2010 Merle McPherson Award. Dr. McPherson, Ruth and Rodney, if you would please join me on the stage.

On behalf of the AMCHP Family and Youth leadership committee it is a pleasure to bestow the 2010 Merle McPherson Family Leadership Award and even more of a pleasure to have Dr. McPherson here with us to present it.

Presented for the first time in 2008, this award is developed to honor Dr. Merle McPherson. Dr. McPherson retired from MCHB in January 2007. Upon retirement, she left a legacy of leadership and vision for how to create a new model of family-centered healthcare, delivery for children and youth with special healthcare needs. She has also led the way to expand the family-centered care model for children with special healthcare needs internationally. Merle, thank you for your leadership and we've asked Bob Cook to join us this morning on the stage today as well as to be a part of the presentation as a prior McPherson awardee.

BOB COOK: Our 2010 Awardee is Susan Colburn. She's the Parent Consultant for Alabama Department of Children Rehabilitation Services. Susan is not able to join us in person but we have a video presentation from Susan to share with you followed by a short presentation by the Commissioner of Children's Rehabilitation Services for the State of Alabama.

SUSAN COLBURN: Thank you so much for honoring me with this award, which is even more humbling because of the person it represents and her commitment

to children, youth, and families. I truly wish I could have been with you all in Washington today and I appreciate having the opportunity to use this format to try and somehow convey my feelings of gratitude.

I'm so fortunate to have a job that I truly love and I want to thank the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and Children's Rehabilitation Service for stepping out and making a commitment years ago to embrace the principles of family-centered care. They have found creative ways to involve and provide support to families and many different people in leadership positions have been willing to find ways to make things work. For the past 15 years they've allowed me the privilege of representing families in Alabama who have children and youth with special healthcare needs and I continue to be amazed and inspired by each of them as they meet and overcome the multiple challenges they face.

I've learned something from every family I've had the pleasure of working with. I've also had the opportunity to work on the national level with so many other family leaders as a part of the Family Voices Network. Their passion, commitment, and willingness to share their knowledge and experience have been an example to me and have helped me to become a move effective leader.

Last but not least, I'm so glad that CRS gave me the opportunity to not only attend the AMCHP Conference but also that they have supported my membership and involvement in this organization for many years. It has been an

amazing opportunity to meet and interact with so many talented and caring people from all over the nation.

Families, MCH professionals, and AMCHP staff: I've learned so much from each of you and I thank you for that. I know I don't have to tell you that times are tough right now, for our states, our agencies, and especially for many of the families that we serve, but we can't back down, we have to continue to be committed to what we know is right and work even harder to build partnerships between families and the professionals they interact with.

LORETTA FUDDY: Here to accept the award on Susan's behalf is her colleague, Melinda Davis, Assistant Commissioner for the Alabama Department of Children's Rehabilitative Services.

Melinda, please share our congratulations with Susan and your colleagues on this wonderful award.

MELINDA DAVIS**:** Good morning. I'm behalf of Susan, who could not be here with us today because she has responsibilities for Ryan, I'd like to accept this award. Our Commissioner Carrie Boswell thanks you as well. Susan deserves this award. She's hard-working, she's been in the field for over 20 years working and advocating for families and children, and we wish so much that she could have been here today but we'll make sure that we present this award to her at

work in an appropriate way so that all of the staff of the agency can participate. Thank you so much.

LORETTA FUDDY: Thank you. It's now my great pleasure to introduce this morning's speaker: Dan Heath. Dan and his brother Chip are best-selling authors and commentators. You may have read or heard of Dan and Chip's first book, which was a New York Best Seller, "Made to Stick: Why Some Ideas Survive and Others Die." Made to Stick has been translated into 29 languages and it was retired from the Business Week Best Seller list after 24 month run.

Dan is a senior fellow at Duke University K Center, which supports social entrepreneurs. Dan is also a columnist for Fast Company Magazine and consultant to many large businesses nationwide.

Dan and Chip's recent book has been really much awaited and I know I was looking forward to having it being released, "Switch: How to Change When Change is Hard," was just released this February. You may have even seen it in bookstores or maybe even on your way to the airport.

How relevant is the topic to us today? All of us are experiencing many, many changes within our organizations and it's not changed for growth, it's changed for downsizing and many of us have seen reduction in personnel, our budgets, consolidation and even elimination of programs. But we also know that MCH

means Make Change Happen and despite all the environmental pressures. We know that positive change is needed to make a difference for all women, children, and family, and we know that we are all up to that challenge.

So please join me in welcoming Dan Heath to AMCHP. Thank you.

DAN HEATH: Good morning. It is an absolute honor to be speaking to you this morning. If ever there is a group that cares deeply about change, it's all of you. So I'm going to try to inspire you this morning with some thoughts on how to make change a little bit easier and the thoughts will come from the book that I just released with my brother Chip and I want to rewind back to the start of that research process. Because when we started talking to people about change we quickly came to realize that people have very strong opinions about change and in fact they tend to be very strong, negative opinions.

So this was the most common quote we heard when we talked to people about change, followed perhaps by this and number two, and it gets worse. But I want to actually present the opposite point of view for a moment because I don't think it's quite this easy. I want to point out that there are aspects of life where change comes very easily. And let's start with food, for instance. Ketchup is the quintessential American condiment. It will forever be the number one condiment in America, always has been, always will be. Right? Wrong.

For the last eight years, ketchup has been outsold by salsa. This would have been unthinkable 50 years ago, right? Can you imagine June Cleaver in the kitchen whipping up a batch of Pico de gallo or for the beef? So it seems that food is an area where we don't mind change so much. What about technology?

This posture didn't exist three years ago and now it's part of every household in America. And really do all of you, with your cell phones on silent right now, do you want to go back to this era?

So it seems we don't mind change when it comes to technology. What about fashion? We seem to welcome change in fashion, and I want to go on record in front of you right now as saying, "Thank God that that's true." That guy in the yellow pants is just priceless, priceless.

We welcome change when it comes to communication. If you know what any of these acronyms mean, you have changed. I want to even suggest that we change even when it's a nuisance to change. Imagine that someone had come to you 20 years ago and said, "Hey, I've got this brilliant idea. What I want is for millions of Americans to start digging through their trash and separating their trash into categories and put them in different buckets and organize them differently and put them out in the street in different containers." Would you have signed up for that? Isn't that exactly the kind of change that is supposed to be

impossible? But I also don't want to oversimplify, but I think we should realize that there are even large changes out there that we welcome.

For instance let's talk about the biggest change of them all. I suspect many of you have committed this change. What a great expression. Now for those of you who are parents in the crowd, if your mission in life was to minimize the amount of change you experienced, you have made a deeply dumb decision. You have really blown it because even when this guy grows up it's not going to be a whole lot easier.

So look sometimes even big changes seem to come voluntarily, even easily and yet, let's be honest, there are other areas where change is very difficult. One in five Americans still smokes. We all know there's a child obesity epidemic that seemingly we can't turn back. We know that even the simplest things at work can be problems and you know you still can't get your kid to get his dirty clothes into the hamper. So look where do we conclude or where do we land from all this?

All we can really say is that sometimes change is hard and sometimes it's easy. It was precisely at that point that my brother and I began to research the book Switch because that posed a kind of mystery to us; why is it that some change is so hard and other changes come to easily. What's the difference? And more importantly, how can we learn from the easy changes to make some of those really hard ones a little bit easier?

So in the book Switch, and by the way I want to let you know that when you walk out of here, after this session, you will be handed a free copy of Switch. Don't clap for me; your organizers got that for you. Yeah. Thank you, Mike.

So in the book Switch what we do is we go through decades worth of research and psychology to see what does science tell us about that moment when someone begins to act in a new way. And there's one finding in particular from psychology that I think is absolutely pivotal to change and I want to unveil it to you by talking about a relatively unusual gismo called the clockey. Anybody have a clockey by any chance? Any owners? Not a one. Okay maybe I'll sell some today.

This is an alarm clock and like any alarm clock, you set it the night before and in the morning when the time comes for the alarm to go off, something unusual happens and I want to show you kind of a dramatic recreation of that moment if I may. So the morning comes, clockey leaps off of your nightstand and begins to roll around the floor. It makes little robot noises and it will continue to roll around the floor until you get up in your underwear and crawl after it on the floor, chase down this rogue alarm clock.

So what to make of this? I want to suggest to you that this alarm clock actually reveals a great deal about our psychology and most fundamentally I think what it

tells us is that we're all schizophrenic. And what I mean is the night before, when you set the time on your alarm clock, it was the rational side of your brain that was in charge. You thought ahead to the next day and you thought well I'd like to be at the office by 9:00 but I'd like to get a jog in beforehand so I better set the alarm clock for 6:30; it was a good plan, it was a smart plan. Was it the rational side of you that woke up the next morning? It was not the rational side. It was your alter ego, the emotional side, the animal side that wanted nothing more in the world than 15 more minutes of sleep. So you hit the snooze button and you go back to sleep and you hit the snooze button and you go back to sleep; that's where the clockey comes in. Notice that the clockey represents a kind of declaration of war by the rational side against the emotional side because the rational side is no dummy; it knows what the emotional side is like and so by buying the clockey you're essentially making it impossible to oversleep.

Now this is not the way a rational species is supposed to work. Right? If Spock wants to get up in the morning, he'll just get up. No drama required and yet we all have this kind of internal decent, this internal disagreement. In fact, I think the clockey is a brilliant invention and I want to predict that some day somebody is going to make a fortune designing snack food that runs away from us when we're on a diet.

So Psychologists use a lot of different names to talk about these two systems. You guys have probably heard these terms. The rational side sometimes is

called the conscious system, the deliberative system. The emotional side is sometimes called the unconscious or automatic system. Whatever lingo you use, we've all experienced this personally and science tells us that it's simply true; we have two independent systems that sometimes agree and sometimes disagree.

Now in the book Switch, we chose a metaphor to stand in for these two systems and it was a metaphor coined by a Psychologist named John Height at the University of Virginia and I think it captures the dynamic here perfectly.

So John Height said that that emotional side of us is kind of like a big elephant. It's impulsive, it's instinctive and it's really, really powerful. And on it's back is a human rider that represents the rational side of us, the part of us that plans, that analyzes. Now the rider appears to be the one in charge, right. He's the one with the reins right? He's the one that sets the course and yet it's perfectly obvious that if these two ever disagree about which direction to go my money's on the 5-ton elephant.

So what do we make of this? This picture, in my mind, tells you everything you need to know about why a diet is hard. Because it's the rational side of us that things boy we better lose that last 10 pounds and it's elephant that wants the Double-stuffed Oreos. Who wins that tug-of-war? The elephant. We all know what the voice of the elephant sounds like, right? We come home after a long stressful day and the elephant is the one who whispers in our ear, "You deserve

ice cream.” The elephant is the one when you’re supposed to be focusing on some writing or on a memo at a work, the elephant says, “Check your e-mail again.” You’ve had a few too many drinks one night and all the sudden the elephant pipes up with some naughty advice, “Call your ex.”

The elephant side of us is impulsive, but I don’t want to cartoon the elephant. The elephant is not the villain. For every weakness that the elephant has, it has a strength. The elephant is also the part of us that says, “Wouldn’t it be cool if we could pull this off?” The elephant provides the spark that has fueled every inventor, ever scientist, every entrepreneur. The elephant is also the part of us that when we catch ourselves in a situation that’s ethically ambiguous, the elephant’s the part that says, “This just doesn’t feel right.” And perhaps most fundamentally of all, the elephant is the part of us that says, “Let’s get something done. Let’s move.”

This is maybe surprising. But there have been studies done of brain-damaged patients where their emotional centers have been selectively destroyed or damaged in some way. So we would think that okay well with all that emotional baggage out of the way the rational side would take over and we will become these paragons of rationality, making perfect decisions for ourselves. And actually that’s not at all what happens. What happens is that the patients become pathologically indecisive? The powers of rationality are there but they can spend

hours debating about what color pen to use because the emotional side of us is what gives us the fuel, the power to do something.

So where does this leave us? Well, let's talk about the writer. The rider's virtues are obvious; the rider makes plans, the rider solves problems, but the rider is also prone to spinning his wheels, to getting lost in analysis. So if you've got a friend who can agonize for 30 minutes about what to have for dinner, that's a rider problem. So back to the original question: why is change hard?

Change is hard whenever these two systems disagree. And specifically, if you think about someone that you'd like to change, maybe it's someone in your office, maybe it's someone in the general public. There are probably three cases why they would resist change. One of them is a rider problem and that is they're just not sure what they need to do differently. That's a direction problem. Second is an elephant problem and that's one you're all familiar with: I don't feel like it, I don't want to. That's an emotion problem. And finally there's an environment problem. They may even be interested in the change, they may be receptive, but there may be things out there that block them or make it difficult.

So what I want to suggest to you this morning is that there's a simple three-part framework for change. It is no **** and I'm well aware of that, but I do think it is a simple framework that you can apply to almost any behavior change situation and I want to unpack it a little bit for you. First, a quick overview.

The first part of the framework is that you've got to provide direction to the rider. So the rational side of us, the rider is the one that gets long, spinning its wheels, so what it needs is crystal clear direction. Second, you've got to motivate the elephant. And unfortunately the elephant does not speak the language of logic. We'll talk about that.

Finally, you've got to shape the path. If you want change to happen, you've got to simply make it easier for that change to occur. So let's take these one-by-one and let's start with directing the rider.

I want to tell you about a strategy to do this called Finding the Bright Spots. There's a ninth grader named Bobby – this is a true story – and he comes from a troubled home. Social Services are keeping an eye on his situation at home; he's constantly in trouble at school to the point where they're now thinking about shipping him off to a center for troubled youth. So he's sent to the counselor's office one day – not the first time. But there's a new counselor and this counselor practices a new kind of therapy called Solutions Focused Brief Therapy; some of you may be familiar with it. I want to show you a transcript of their actual counseling session.

So I want you to notice right off the bat how different this counselor named Murphy, how different his approach is. Bobby, tell me about the times at school

when you don't get into trouble as much. Well, now that's odd. Most counselors would have started with, "Bobby, tell me what's wrong. Tell me what's going on at home. Tell me what's going on in your classes." They would have tried to mine some of those problems in hopes of finding solutions. Murphy's ignoring all that; he's just saying, "Well, what isn't broken?" And Bobby responds by saying, "Well I never get in trouble that much in Mrs. Smith's class." Murphy then digs in a little deeper: "What's different about Mrs. Smith's class?" Bobby says, "I don't know. She's just nicer; we get along great." Murphy's not satisfied, "What exactly does she do that's nicer?" This conversation continues and pretty soon they've identified three specific things that Mrs. Smith does differently.

Number one, she greets Bobby at the door with a smile and perhaps understandably Bobby's other teachers tended to avoid him. Second thing she does is she gives him easier work to complete; she gives him more time. Bobby also has a learning disability and so that's helpful to him. And finally, before every assignment, she checks in with Bobby to make sure he understands the instructions. So what do you do now?

Well if you're Murphy, what you've just discovered is that it's possible for Bobby to have a good learning experience at school and you've just gotten three good suggestions for ways to make that possible. So what does Murphy do? He turns these learnings into instructions for the other teachers. So watch this. If you go to Bobby's other five teachers and say, "Will you try greeting him at the door? Will

you try giving him easier work to complete? Will you try making sure that he understands the instructions?" Notice how what is working becomes a game plan for what's not working.

Within a couple of months, Bobby's record transforms as follows: before he was getting in trouble in about four to five class periods every day. After the intervention, he was getting in trouble in about one to two class periods a day. Now, look, he's still not an eagle scout but let's be honest this counselor did something remarkable. This is an incredible behavior transformation; given that, Murphy didn't solve a single one of his underlying problems. Murphy did nothing to affect Bobby's experience at home. He did nothing to affect Bobby's fundamental disabilities when it comes to learning. What Murphy did was say, "Forget the problems, what is working despite those problems right now and how can we do more of that?" That, in a single question, is what I mean by finding the bright spots.

I think this is an incredibly flexible tool of change and I know over the next day and a half before the conference concludes you're going to spend a lot of time learning from other programs. What I want to suggest to you is while there's an incredible amount of value in doing that, that perhaps the easiest way to improve your program is not necessarily by emulating other programs. It's by emulating your own program and its best moments, by finding the bright spots to your own work.

Now I talk a lot to businesses and businesses are often bombarded with these articles and exhortations to become more like Apple because Apple's the cool company. Apple's the one with the great design and the great ads and the sexy brand, but it's preposterous to think that your average business is going to turn into Apple; it's not about trying to transform yourself into something you're not, it's about trying to do more of what you're really good at, what you're proven to have succeeded at before. And I want to show you that this philosophy works on a broad scale as well.

You may be familiar with Jerry Sternin and his philosophy of positive deviance is actually very similar to what I'm talking about with finding the bright spots. I'll tell you a story about his work in Vietnam in the '70s. So Sternin was sent to Vietnam by Save the Children with a goal to reduce child malnutrition. He got over to the airport there with his wife and his child, he didn't speak a word of Vietnamese and he was actually met at the airport by a government official who let Sternin know that not everybody in the government was pleased to have him there. So the government official gave him six months to accomplish something before his welcome would run out. Six months to influence child malnutrition in Vietnam.

So Sternin does his homework and he figured out that, as you'd expect, malnutrition is caused by a real dense thicket of problems, big systemic forces like poverty, lack of education, lack of clean water access, lack of sanitation

systems and he says to him all of this knowledge, all of his research was TBU. And I'm not a big fan of acronyms but I suspect this is one you'll want to hold on to. Sternin says, "It's all TBU, true but useless."

What is Jerry Sternin going to do about poverty in Vietnam? Nothing. What's he going to do about lack of access to clean water? Nothing. What can he do? He goes into a single village and calls together all the mothers in the village and he says, "I want to do a project to help you nourish your children better. Will you help me?" Mothers have similar instincts the world around, so of course they helped. And the first thing they did was they went out and gathered data on every child in the village: height, weight, other signs of health. And then they came back together and Sternin said based on the data you found are there kids who are perfectly healthy for their age. They scanned their list and said sure enough there are several of those kids. He said, "Now wait a second, you mean to tell me that despite our disadvantages here that we don't have as many resources as people in the city do, it's possible to raise a perfectly healthy child right here?" I said, "Yeah, it seems that way." He said, "Well, let's go see what those families are doing differently than the rest of us."

So the mothers go out and begin to shadow these bright spot families and they quickly figure out that the mothers are doing things that are different from the social norms. So the norms in the village were to serve two large bowls of white rice a day, for the meals. But these bright spot moms were actually splitting that

up, same amount of rice, but split up into four different smaller bowls of rice and the significance of that was that a malnourished stomach simply can't process that much food at once. So by spreading it out they were getting more choleric bang for the buck.

They were also including different ingredients into the bowl of rice. So they were sprinkling in tiny shrimp and crabs from the rice patties. They were including sweet potato greens, which were thought to be kind of a low class food but however low class these foods were, what these mothers were doing was genius, they were including protein and vitamins in their children's diets. So no great surprise then that their children were fairing better.

So having discovered these practices, Sternin calls the mothers back together, he begins to organize cooking groups, where these mothers can learn this new style of food preparation, they begin to share these practices with each other. Six months later, two-thirds of the children in the village were better nourished. When some academics from the U.S. went back to check on the progress of this a couple of years later, they found that even children who weren't born when Sternin was there were better nourished.

Well as you'd expect when something as dramatic as this happens, it doesn't stay confined to one village. By word-of-mouth and by Sternin's own efforts, the practices began to spread. And I want to be clear that it wasn't this formula:

sweet potato greens and tiny shrimp and craps that spread, it was the process that spread. There were villages in Vietnam that didn't even have access to sweet potato greens but in every village there were always some kids who were healthier than others and thus there were always bright spots that could be studied to find the formula that would work right there, in that village, despite that obstacles.

Eventually these practices reached over 2.2 million Vietnamese in 265 villages. If that story doesn't blow your mind -- my goodness.

Let's rewind to the beginning: an American doesn't speak a word of Vietnamese, goes to Vietnam to fight child malnutrition and he doesn't affect any of the underlying forces that cause malnutrition. All he does, was he goes to a single place, he asked what's working today and how can we do more of that.

So I couldn't help but think of the work that you do when I came across this story because you're dealing with the kind of big scary forces that Sternin was tackling. These are forces that are driven by lots of the big thorny problems, the same ones that Sternin found TBU: poverty, lack of education, et cetera. Now what I want to ask you: is our tendency is to always start with the problems. Have you thought about starting with the solutions in some of these areas? Could you go into a high-risk area and find the mothers who have managed to dodge the obesity epidemic? How have they managed to stay at a healthy weight despite

the odds? Could you find a community where the pre-term pregnancy rate is strangely low? Are there ways that you can study these bright spots, this proof that success is possible despite the odds?

The second part of the framework is about motivating the elephant, that emotional side of us. And the elephant speaks the language of feeling. I suspect many of you have encountered this in your own work. Knowledge is rarely enough to spark change and that's kind of frustrating because we're all analytical people in this room, it should be that we live in a world where once you've got the right dataset, where once you've got the right facts, where once you know what the right answer is you could simply communicate that and change what happened.

Unfortunately, the elephant doesn't like the language of logic and this is why so many public health initiatives are difficult. Look at the way we put warning labels on cigarettes. Cigarette smoke contains carbon monoxide. Do we think that was the missing piece of the puzzle for smokers? Holy cow. I didn't realize this stuff was unhealthy, my goodness.

Now, in other countries, they manage to do a better job of getting a little bit emotional with those messages. So in Italy, for instance, they have this big bold warning, "Smoking kills." Little more direct. But what I think is what they do in Canada; you may have seen this. They actually have big photos on the packs in

Canada, like this. Did you hear that reaction? That was an elephant reaction. It was a visceral reaction. This is the kind of thing that could potentially cut through to the level of behavior change. What about this one?

Now if you're a 17-year-old Canadian male, which is more likely to change your behavior? The knowledge that there's carbon monoxide in it or this photo? This is exactly why I think that the debates we're having right now about making these warnings more prominent, requiring restaurants to publish choleric data, I am frankly a pessimist about whether this is going to have any impact. I think that we will be much better off creating food labels that look like this.

So the elephant responds to emotion. We've also all experienced that the elephant has this kind of freeze-up reaction when the change that's being expected of us feels too daunting. I know every single person in this room but have experienced this at some point in their life. You know what you need to do but it feels too big and when something feels too big you do everything in your power to dodge it, to avoid it, to go some other direction; it's just natural.

So what do you do in a situation like this? Well, one strategy that has worked across a lot of different domains is simply to take the change that feels too big and shrink it, as a way to get started, as a way to get on the path.

So I'll give you kind of a silly example. So I have a dread of housecleaning. I'm not proud of this, mind you, but it just feels – it feels big. It's something I always put off and of course it gets worse when you put it off because it turns out the house gets dirtier over time. So with each cycle that the dread increases, but there's a great plan for decreasing this dread that comes from an online housecleaning guru called The Fly Lady. Some of you may know the Fly Lady. She says if you have this problem that I do, take a kitchen timer and wind it up to five minutes; it's called the Five Minute Room Rescue. And as the timer ticks down you rush in to the dirtiest room in your house and you do everything you can to clean up, to tidy up, to scrub, to make things look better and when the timer reaches zero, it dings, you can quit with a clear conscious, but do you quit? No. Because once five minutes has gone by, you're in the groove. You started to have those little burst of satisfaction that come with seeing you're making progress, the rooms getting cleaner, this is possible, I can do this. So you get in the groove and you keep cleaning until things are tidy.

Now another example came from a doctor named Robert Moore. He said one of his patients was a woman named Julie. She was depressed, she had mother, she had two kids, she was obese, at risk of diabetes. And he said he knew that the single greatest piece of advice you could give her was to exercise, that would help with both the depression and the obesity, but he said she – he knew from her reactions how she would take that stock medical advice, "Well, get two to three hours of cardio every week and do some aerobics." He knew how

preposterous that would sound to her and so he tried something different. He shrunk the change. He said, “Julie, I know you’ve told me before that you like to unwind by watching an hour or two of TV every night. Will you try something? During one of the commercial breaks, will you stand up and just walk in place?” She said she kind of looked like incredulous that something so simple could come from her doctor, she said, “Well yeah I can do that.”

Next time he saw Julie she came back and said I’ve been walking in place, in fact, I started walking in place during all of the commercial breaks, what other little things can I do? Now this opened a conversation that ballooned nine months later when Julie started doing proper exercise routines. It was not possible to go directly from point A to nine months to those exercise routines. It required movement. It required the knowledge that this didn’t have to be a huge daunting change. So was that walking in place for a minute during a commercial break, was that really transforming her health? Absolutely not. It was transforming her motivation. This was not a health problem, it was a motivation problem. And by shrinking the change, you can impact that.

So two strategies for dealing with the elephant: one is to speak to emotion. That that weight of that visceral impact that we had when we saw those yellowing decaying teeth on the Canadian cigarette pack. And shrink the change any time you feel like the scale of change feels too daunting to people.

I actually want to go back to the rider for a second, in the context of what we just learned about the elephant. Everybody in this room I think has learned this lesson: that change is more effective when it's framed in behavioral terms and, in fact, a lot of the grousing that you hear about well people resist change, people hate change. A lot of times I think the real villain is that people simply haven't gotten clear and crisp enough about what's expected. I want to give you an example of somebody who did this brilliantly.

A couple of health researchers in West Virginia, they had studied the dietary habits of this one community and found that it was pretty bad, even worse than the normal bad American dietary habits. So they were anxious to do something to help, but they also knew that it wasn't going to get them anywhere to come in and talk about eating healthier or eating fresher foods or eating whole foods. They wanted to get really, really crisp. And in their research they came across something kind of remarkable. They found that the single largest source of saturated fat in the diets of these folks came from whole milk and, in fact, what they discovered was that if people simply switched from whole milk to either one percent or skim milk that that would bring their overall diet in compliance with the USDA's daily standards. Everything else could stay the same; they could still be eating at TGI Fridays and eating cheeseburgers, but if they just switched the milk. That alone would get them into compliance. That's pretty powerful.

So they launched a campaign to urge people to do exactly that: to make this switch. And in the campaign they included messages like this: that a single glass of whole milk has the same amount of saturated fat as five strips of bacon, which is why my breakfast these days is a glass of skim milk and five strips of bacon. It just seems like the better part of the trade-off to be on.

So did this work? This campaign, by the way, cost about 10 cents per capita in terms of the media expenditures. Before the campaign, the market share of one percent and skim milk was about 16 percent. After the campaign, 41 percent. Six months later, after the campaign had ended, they came back; market share was still in the mid 30s. This was a successful behavior change campaign for dietary habits; the kind of stuff that most of us just shake our heads and say, “Oh, that’s never possible. You can’t get these West Virginians to eat healthier; they’re just not that kind of people.” Don’t we make judgments like that about people constantly? And yet why was it so easy to make this shift? It was easy because they gave crystal clear direction.

When it comes to change ambiguity is the animal. Now I’m not telling you anything that you don’t know; you guys already do this stuff brilliantly. Nobody in this room would say something as generic as this: consult your doctor for advice about reducing the risk of SIDS. What you’ve learned to do is give people specific behavior instructions. Always place a baby on his or her back to sleep. It may be common sense in this room but I’m here to tell you in the larger world of

public health, this is not common sense and what better exhibit could I bring to your attention than this. Everything that was smart about the one percent milk campaign is absent here with our friend the food pyramid.

I want you to just behold the sheer opaque abstraction of this thing for a second. The only thing that you can immediately glean from this symbol is the little guy running up the stairs on the side. So presumably that's about exercise; that's good. Although, I always found it a little bit troubling that the guy doesn't seem to have a torso. It seems like that would complicate exercise, but…

The next question I'd have is why is this thing a food pyramid. What does a pyramid mean? What does it symbolize? It usually symbolizes hierarchy, right? That being at the top of pyramid is more important than being at the bottom. Well this was actually the way the pyramid used to look; you remember the old stacked rose on the food pyramid? The problem was, there were some people who interpreted it to mean that the oils at the top were the most important. Whoops. So they reconfigured the food pyramid to feature these kind of abstract streaks of color. Now each streak stands for a category of food, so for instance that orange streak at the far left is grains. The little tiny yellow one in the middle is oils and if you dig even further you'll find that each streak comes with a recommendation. So for instance, this is true, for adults, they recommend – oh, I was going to make a joke about how given that the pyramid has no symbolism it

might as well be a food rumbas or for that matter a food rooster. I kind of like the food rooster, I don't know.

So anyway what I was saying was the yellow streak comes with the recommendation that adults should have no more than five to seven teaspoons of oil a day. Mike, how many teaspoons of oil did you have yesterday? I am not making this up. This is literally the recommendation: five to seven teaspoons of oil a day. The grains, they come depending on your gender and your age, they give you a number of grain equivalence. I could not engineer a worse strategy for changing people's behavior. I couldn't. This is completely divorced from the interactions that people have with food. What are those interactions? What do I buy at the grocery store? What do I order at TGI Fridays to not be grotesquely unhealthy? What kind of snacks do I buy for my kids that have a reasonable amount of health in them?

It has nothing to do with teaspoons of oil or grain equivalence.

Desire plus direction equals change. So what we just saw from the elephant category was that the motivation to change comes from feeling. If you can include that feeling, if you can map that feeling to a crystal clear direction – buy one percent milk, put your baby on its back to sleep. That's where change comes from. Now nowhere can we see this formula more in action than with a drug intervention.

If ever there was a change problem that should be impossible, it should be heroine addiction, it should be crystal meth addiction, and yet what works in a surprising number of cases? This family intervention. Think about the mechanics of this. The addicts comes into a room, most of the people they care about on earth are there, they tell these incredibly moving stories about the way the addiction has hurt them, has hurt their relationship. It is an emotional, a deeply emotional experience and yet the emotion itself is not enough to create the change. If everybody came together in a room and shared these stories and then everybody went home do you think the addicts would change? No. There's part two of the story.

Part one is to provide the emotional fuel for something to change. Part two is come with us right now into rehab. It's part emotional fuel and part crystal clear direction.

A lot of times, especially with social entrepreneurs and social movements, when things are difficult it's because one of these pieces is missing. Now I'll tell you, I've seen both pieces missing. A lot of times there's emotion for a change and people just have no idea where to go. Controversially, sometimes there's lots of instruction about why you should do something or how do to something and no attention to the fuel that would make the change possible.

So, my hope for all of you is that you will keep that **** that you've already showed for making all of your changes behavioral, for getting to that clarity of the one percent milk campaign. Ask yourself when you're plotting new campaigns: what is our one percent milk here?

There's one final piece of the puzzle and that's the path. We've talked about the rider and the elephant, which are part of people's brains. We're talking about psychology, but now let's get out of psychology and get into the environment. What shape the path means is simply that if you're able to tweak the environment the environment shapes behavior.

I want to give you a quick thought experiment here. So, later this week you'll be back home, picture yourself driving down the road and you're all good drivers, responsible drivers, you'll be going the posted speed limit and you're just driving along and all the sudden there's a demon, will cut across three lanes of traffic and cut you off, take a quick left in front you and you slam on your brakes, getting a little whiplash, your laptop bag slams into the glove compartment, and you raise your fist and you say to yourself, "What an mmm. What an ill-advised maneuver that was."

No, you probably say something a little more graphic than that, if you're like me. Probably start hoping that person's not breathing to spread their demon driver genes into the next generation. But let me ask you a question. Has there ever

been a point in your life when you were driving so crazy that other people would have been justified in cursing your name? If you're like me, the answer is yes. And another question for you: in that moment, were you revealing to the world your true a-hollian core character? Was that you showing the world what you're really about? Or was it something about the situation that turned you into a bad driver? You were late for an interview, you were late for a date, you had a sick kid in the car and there was something reason why you had to drive like that. I suspect most of you would say it was something about the situation and yet when it comes to other people we never extend them that courtesy. In fact, there's a label on this from psychology, The Fundamental Attribution Error, which is a mouthful, but basically what it means is that when we analyze other people's behavior we tend to attribute it to their core, to their character, to who they are, rather than to any situational influences that may be on them.

Now this is a critical error when it comes to change. Critical. Because so often it's easier to shape the environment around someone than it is to go about changing their core character. Let me give you an example. At Stanford they did an experiment where they stages a food drive, a can food drive, and it wasn't staged in the – it was not staged in the sense that the food really did go to the poor but what the researchers were interested in is what would motivate students to give. They wanted to know why would some students give and others wouldn't.

Well so one really obvious theory is well some students are nice and some students are jerks, and that's why some would give and some wouldn't. Right? That's pretty obvious. So they wanted to test for this. So they went into a dorm and they had all the students rank the other students in their dorm from most kind to least kind. So we have a comprehensive mapping of jerks in this dorm and they threw out the middle; they just kept the most kind students and the least kind students, so they had the saints and the jerks. All right.

A second theory was will more clarity of instruction contribute to students giving. So they had two different messages that they sent out announcing this campaign. One was a little more abstract. It said, "We're having a can food drive all of next week, Monday to Friday. We're hosting it at the campus plaza. You might want to stop by and bring a can."

The more concrete message said the following, "Hey, we're having a can food drive. Maybe bring a can of beans. You might want to pick a time in your schedule when you know you're going to be near this campus plaza so it would be convenient for you to come by and by the way here's a map." For the record, this was not in some obscure place on campus. The map was more comfort than genuine instruction.

So let's go to the scoreboard. What happened here? So remember we had the saints and the jerks. We had two different messages. If you look at the abstract

message, here's the percentage of students who gave. So eight out of every hundred saints gave at least one can. None of the jerks gave, as predicted, none of the jerks. And yet eight percent is not a very good ratio for the saints, is it?

For the concrete message, 42 percent of the saints gave, 25 percent of our jerks. Now I want to just highlight two cells here. Look at that will you? What this tells me is if you're a hungry person in the Bay Area, you are three times better off betting on a jerk with a map than a saint without one.

Now, to me, this study is tremendously optimistic. Tremendously optimistic. We would have thought – I think most people's knee-jerk instinct would have been to say well we're never going to get those jerks to give, right? And yet something as trivial as a slightly more specific letter, imagine what would have happened if they would have called to remind people of the food drive. Imagine what would have happened if they put signage all over campus pointing you to the food drive. Imagine what would have happened if they left bags to collect cans outside their dorm room door. What looks like a people problem, is often simply a situation problem.

Now, again, I have to pay you tribute, because a lot of audiences this is news to them. This is not news to you; you guys have figured out how to change the situation. Can we make lactation rooms more common, more prevalent? Can we create vending machines that don't just have a lot of junk in them? Can we

create safe cribs and safe practices for putting babies to sleep? These are situational solutions.

Let me challenge you to double down on this approach; it has worked for you and it will continue to work for you and there's evidence all around us that environmental solutions work. What about something as simple as this button? This button has probably cost me hundreds of dollars of my income over the years. The Amazon one-click order button. Can we just pay them a little respect for this? Amazon came of age at the same time as a dozen other, probably dozens, of other Internet retailers. They were the only people to obsess about shaping the path to an order. They actually have a patent on this technology; did you know that?

What about other situations in our world? Those white lane markers that we all take for granted. Don't take those for granted; there was a moment when there were no white lane markers. Somebody like you was in a room with a white board and they were brainstorming about how to get people to drive straight. "Guys, how do we get people to go straight on the road; otherwise, they're going to run into each other?" And somebody raised their hand, "Marge, yeah, you got an idea?" "Yeah, what if we put white lane markers on the roads?" Everybody thought, "Oh, that's a great idea Marge. Who do we call? What vendors can we use to get the markers out there?"

I mean, what if we lived in a world with no white lane markers? What if we just – what if we had to change people's hearts and minds to convince them of the need to drive straight? We had to go convince celebrities to PSA's.

The environment is a lot easier to change than people's hearts and minds. Even in the most preposterous situations this is true. This is a picture of the men's bathroom at the airport in Amsterdam. This bathroom, like many others, was having a problem that I will euphemistically call spillage. And this was not just gross, it was costing them money, it was costing them extra time and so some smart person, somewhere in the Amsterdam Airport System said, "What if we could do something about this? What if we don't just conclude that all men are pigs with poor aim? What if we could do something about this?"

So they tried sometimes I think you'll find fascinating. This is a urinal. You see that little black spec in there? I'm going to zoom in on that. They etched a fly into the urinals. They etched a fly into the urinals. Now, I know there's a minority of men in the audience but I have to just share that from the male perspective the way that this picture looks to us is as follows.

There is no way you're going to stand at a urinal with a fly in it and not aim. So they had carefully chosen the location of this fly to minimize spillage and literally overnight the spillage problem was cured.

So what's the takeaway? We all know what the takeaway is. This strategy, it helps people drive straight, it helps people buy more stuff at Amazon, it helps kids make healthier choices when they're buying a snack at school, it even minimizes spillage in airports. When something can range across that many domains, you know there's something to it and you guys already know this, continue to show that mastery that you've shown.

So I've introduced a simple three-part framework for change. If you can remember this picture, you can get back to all the things I've talked about. The rider needs direction, the elephant needs motivation, and the path needs clearing.

There's one more thought that I'd like to share with you and it actually comes from an ad by the California Tobacco Council and I thought this quote was so brilliant. Here's what they said, "It took you years to learn how to smoke, how come you thought you'd be able to quit the first time?" Isn't that great?

I do not believe, as a general principal, that change is hard. But I do believe, as a general principal, that change takes time. And there's a simple reason for that, that when we change we replace the old ways with the new ways and we've been practicing the old ways for months or years. We've been rehearsing.

If you taught Michael Phelps a new breaststroke it might be a brilliant idea but it's going to take a long time for him to learn that new pattern; change takes time. And in fact, what they found in smoking research is that most people try to quit five to seven times before they succeed. The only way to really screw up a change is to conclude, after you've tried to quit two or three times and failed, that you can't, that you're just not cut out of it.

Failure is part of the deal when it comes to change. Failure is part of the deal and it's funny that we have this instinct that that's true so naturally when it comes to our kids. Right? Think about when your kid learned to walk; how many times he or she failed before they finally managed to get up on two legs. How many dozens or hundreds of times did they fail? And yet that failure wasn't a sign to you that you should discontinue the work, was it? Did you ever think, "Oh, well, you're just not cut out for walking. Sorry." And yet we don't extend that same courtesy to ourselves as adults. We need to give ourselves permission to fail because in almost any change, failure is part of the deal.

So my number one wish for all of you is to be persistent. There are a lot of people out there, outside this room, rooting for all of you, counting on all of you to make the kind of changes that will make people's lives better. You've done it in the past and despite the obstacles today you're going to continue to do it in the future and that's why it was such an honor for me to be able to talk to you.

Thank you so much for the invitation to be here. Thank you. Thanks.